

Wycombe's title hopes slump

Sports Mail Special Report

ISTHMIAN League leaders Wycombe Wanderers' title hopes received a serious setback today at Loakes Park, where Bromley fully deserved their 3-0 win.

Wycombe: Maskell; Bradshaw, Beck; Baker, Rundle, Gale; Samuels, Roystone, Bates, Horseman, Merrick.

Bromley: Bonner; Bridge, McAllister, McGill, Gaston, Luckhurst; McGibbon, Howe, Brown, England, Hutchins.

Referee: M. Bayston (Welwyn Garden City).

Wycombe had a lucky escape in the first minute, when the Bromley centre-forward put his inside right through, but Howe hesitated for a fraction and goalkeeper Maskell managed to throw out a hand and stop the shot.

Bromley's accurate short-passing, in spite of the heavy going, gave the Wycombe defence plenty of trouble in speedy attacks.

Wycombe on the other hand were kept largely at long range, though one 20 yard

drive by Roystone tested Bonner.

Bromley looked the more workmanlike side in attack and took the lead after ten minutes when HUTCHINS cut in from the left wing and beat Maskell with a brilliant shot.

With improving support from the halves, Wycombe subsequently claimed more of the play but their attacks lacked cohesion and few shots reached goalkeeper Bonner.

The Wanderers had a great chance to equalise after 35 minutes when the Bromley goalkeeper was penalised but Bonner made a spectacular save from Bates' penalty.

Then just before half-time Bromley broke away again and centre forward BROWN put them two up with a shot which deceived Maskell.

Half-time: Wycombe Wanderers 0, Bromley 2.

Hitting back with much more determination and punch in the attack in the second half Wycombe were unlucky

when a shot by Samuels cannoned against the upright.

Overeagerness spoiled their chances in a series of all-out attacks in which goalkeeper Bonner again distinguished himself with some daring saves.

Roystone headed just over the bar from a centre by Bates, but the Wycombe thrusts were repeatedly checked by smart intervention by the Bromley backs and the towering centre half Gaston.

Continuing frustration seemed to suck Wycombe's enthusiasm as the game progressed and a heavy shower made conditions increasingly difficult.

Wycombe indeed could do nothing right at this stage and Bromley began to regain some of the initiative. In the 70th minute inside right HOWE seized on a through pass to increase the visitors' lead and virtually settled the issue.

RESULT:
WYCOMBE WAN. 0
BROMLEY 3

WYCOMBE TITLE HOPES UPSET

Wycombe W. 0 Bromley 3

BROMLEY UPSET Wycombe Wanderers' Isthmian title hopes in this, Wycombe's first home League defeat of the season.

Although they had more of the play territorially, they looked stale and towards the end seemed completely dispirited.

Off-form Wycombe, indeed, could do nothing right in attack against the confident Bromley defence in which the towering Gaston dominated at centre half, while goalkeeper Bonner made some daring saves.

Bromley made far fewer attacks but always looked more likely to score. A goal after 10 minutes by left-winger Hutchings gave the Wanderers a jolt from which they never recovered and, after Bonner had saved a penalty from Bates, centre-forward Brown put Bromley two up a minute before half-time.

Wycombe's desperate bid to regain the initiative in the second half failed and another breakaway goal, this time by Howe, came in the 70th minute.